

# THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH ABROAD

A Short History

by Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco



Printshop of St. Job of Pochaev  
Holy Trinity Monastery  
Jordanville, N.Y.  
1997

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**Printed with the Blessing of  
Archbishop Laurus  
of Syracuse and Holy Trinity Monastery**

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**Cover:**

**The Holy Virgin Cathedral in San Francisco, where the incorrupt relics of  
Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco are located.**

СВЯТЫЙ  
ПЕТР  
ПЕРВОУЧИНОВЕ



*A Brief Life*  
*of Our Father Among the Saints*  
**Archbishop John,**  
**Wonder-worker of Shanghai and**  
**San Francisco**

*"This man, who appears weak is, in fact, a miracle of ascetic steadfastness and determination in our time of universal spiritual weakening."*

*— Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky)*

*"If you desire to see a living Saint, go to Bitol to Father John."*

*— Bishop Nicholas (Velimirovich)*

Saint John was born on the 4th of June, 1896 on the country estate of his parents, descendants of nobility, Boris Ivanovich and Glaphira Mikhailovna Maximovitch in the little town of Adamovka in the Province of Kharkov. At Baptism he received his name in honor of Saint Michael the Archangel. His paternal ancestors were of Serbian extraction. One of his ancestors, Saint John, Metropolitan of Tobolsk, was an ascetic of holy life, a missionary, and a spiritual writer. Saint John of Tobolsk lived in the first half of the 18th century and was glorified in 1916. His glorification was the last celebrated during the reign of the Tsar Martyr Nicholas.

Saint John was an obedient child; his sister recalls that it was very easy for his parents to raise him. Ruminating about his future during his youth, he could not make a definite decision as to a career, being unsure as to whether he should dedicate himself to military or civil service. He only knew that his future life would be guided by an insuperable desire to stand up for the Truth, which was nurtured in him by his parents. He





cathedra of the See of Kharkov. This renowned hierarch and theologian was the main advocate of the restoration of the patriarchate in Russia, subsequently the Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich, and finally the First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. Throughout his life this Archpastor inspired the church-oriented academic youth in all matters spiritual, thanks to his principal attribute — his sincere love for them. Having heard about young Michael Maximovitch, of whom many spoke in church circles, Archbishop Anthony desired to meet him. It was in Kharkov that Archbishop Anthony became Saint John's spiritual guide. This relationship continued throughout Archbishop Anthony's whole life.

In Kharkov Michael entered Law School, which he completed in 1918, and served for a while in the Kharkov court during the days when the Ukraine was ruled by the Cossack leader, (Hetman) Skoropatsky. But the heart of the future hierarch was far from this world. When not studying, he spent all of his free time at the university reading spiritual literature, especially favoring the lives of the saints. "While studying the worldly sciences," said the Saint during his election to the episcopacy, "I delved all the more into the study of the Science of sciences, into the study of the spiritual life." Visiting the monastery in which Archbishop Anthony lived, Michael had the opportunity to pray at the tomb of an ascetic of the first half of the 18th century, Archbishop Meletius Leontievich, a deeply revered but not yet glorified righteous one. The soul of the young saint was pierced by a thirst to obtain the true goal and path of life in Christ.

A great impression was made upon Michael by Bishop Varnava (subsequently the Patriarch of Serbia) during his visit to Kharkov. The young Serbian bishop, who was warmly greeted by Archbishop Anthony, related to him the suffering of the Serbian people under the Turkish Yoke. This was in January 1917, before the revolution, when the Serbs, who were battling against Germany, Austria and Turkey, had almost no territory which was free of enemy occupation. Through the inspiration of Archbishop Anthony the response of the Russian people in support of the Serbs was unanimous. In this example, Michael recognized the universal significance of the Church and the duty of a bishop to respond to the needs of all Orthodox people. In turn, Bishop Varnava, upon becoming Patriarch, was particularly hospitable and helpful to the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.

The Russian Revolution forced the Maximovitch family to flee their homeland and evacuate to Yugoslavia, where Michael was able to begin his theological studies at the University of Saint Sava which he later completed in 1925. During his last year, Michael was tonsured a reader in Belgrade by Metropolitan Anthony, who also in 1926 tonsured him a monk in the Milkovo Monastery giving him the name John in honor of his



distant relative, the recently glorified Saint John of Tobolsk. Shortly thereafter he was ordained hierodeacon. On the Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple, the young monastic became a hieromonk. During these years he was a religious instructor at the Serbian State High School, and in 1929 he became an instructor in the Serbian Seminary of the Holy Apostle John the Theologian in the city of Bitol — part of the Ochrid Diocese.

In Bitol, Saint John won the love of his students and it was here that his spiritual struggles became known to those around him. Saint John prayed continually, served the Divine Liturgy daily, or attended Liturgy and partook of Christ's Holy Mysteries, fasted strictly and usually ate once a day late in the evening. With fatherly love the Saint instilled in the seminary students high spiritual ideals. They were the first to discover his great ascetic podvig noticing that the Saint never lay down to sleep, and



*Hieromonk John with Seminarians, Bitol*

when he did doze off, it was only from utter exhaustion and often during a prostration in the corner under the icons. Bishop Nicholas (Velimirovich) valued and loved the young hieromonk John. Upon leaving the seminary once, he turned to a small group of seminarians and said, "Children, listen to Fr. John. He is an Angel of God in the image of a man." The seminarians themselves were convinced that Saint John truly lived an angelic life.

His patience and humility were similar to the patience and humility of the great ascetic and desert dwellers. He relived the events of the Holy Gospel as if they were taking place before his eyes. He always knew the

chapter where to find an event and, when needed, could always quote a given verse. He knew the character and details of every student, so that at any moment he could assess what a student knew or did not know. Saint John had a special gift of God: an unusually good memory. Consequently, such assessments of his students could be made without referring to any previous records or notes. Mutual love bound Saint John and the seminarians together. For them he was the incarnation of all of the Christian virtues. They did not see any shortcomings in him, not even in his speech (Saint John had a slight stammer). There was no problem, personal or social, which he could not solve quickly. There was not a question for which he could not find an answer. His answer was always concise, clear, complete, and exhaustive because he was truly an educated man. His education, his "wisdom," was based on the most stable foundation, "the Fear of God." The Saint prayed zealously for his seminarians. Each night he would make his rounds, checking everyone; adjusting one's pillow, another's blanket. Upon leaving the room he blessed the slumberer with the sign of the cross.

During the first week of Great Lent, Saint John ate nothing more than one prosphora a day, the same during Passion Week. When Great Saturday came his body was completely exhausted. But on the Day of the Holy Resurrection of the Lord he was revived, his strength returned. At Paschal Matins he triumphantly exclaimed, "Christ is Risen!" as if Christ resurrected specifically on that holy night. His face shone. The Paschal joy which the Saint radiated was imparted to everyone in the church. Anyone who was ever in church with Saint John on Pascha experienced this.

In 1934 the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad decided to elevate Saint John to the rank of bishop and assign him to Shanghai as vicar bishop of the Diocese of China. As for Saint John himself, nothing could have been further from his mind, which is obvious from an account of one of his acquaintances from Yugoslavia. Once, when meeting him on the tramway she asked him what had brought him to Belgrade. He answered that he came to Belgrade because he had mistakenly received a notice in place of another hieromonk John, who was to be made a bishop. When she saw him again the next day, he told her that the mistake was worse than he had expected, because it turned out that they had decided to consecrate him a bishop. When he objected, pointing out his stammer, he was told that the Prophet Moses had the same difficulty. The consecration took place on the 28th of May, 1934. Saint John was the last bishop to be consecrated by Metropolitan Anthony.

The young bishop arrived in Shanghai from Serbia on November 21, 1935, the Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple. Many people had gathered on the dock to meet their new archpastor, who wholeheartedly undertook his responsibilities and soon became an estab-

lished figure in the city of Shanghai. The completion of a large cathedral as well as the resolution of an existing jurisdictional conflict awaited him. Saint John quickly quelled this conflict and, in time, established relations with the Serbs, Greeks, and Ukrainians in his diocese. The Saint completed the construction of the huge cathedral in honor of the Icon of the Mother of God "Surety of Sinners" and a three-story house with a bell tower. He dedicated special attention to the spiritual education of the children. He personally taught the Law of God to the upper classes of the



*Saint John's Cathedral in Shanghai*

Commercial Institute and always attended the examinations for the religious courses in all of the schools of Shanghai. He was the inspirer and leader in the construction of churches, a hospital, an asylum for the mentally ill, an orphanage, a home for the elderly, a community dining hall — in short, all of the social undertakings of Russian Shanghai. The Saint was one with his flock. He participated directly in the work of virtually all emigrant organizations.

However, while participating actively in such an array of worldly affairs, he was foreign to the world. From the first day of his arrival in Shanghai, the Saint, as before, served Divine Liturgy daily. No matter where he was, he was always present at Divine Services. Once, as a result of his continual standing, the Saint's foot was severely swollen and a group of physicians, fearing gangrene, prescribed immediate hospitalization. The Saint refused. Upon this, the Russian doctors informed the Parish Council, that they could not take any responsibility for the health and even the life of the patient. The members of the Parish Council, after



extended requests and even threats to forcefully hospitalize him compelled the Saint to agree, and he was sent to the hospital. That evening however he left the hospital on his own and at six o'clock was serving the All Night Vigil as usual.

He performed all of the daily services completely and unabridged, so that at Compline, five or more canons would be read, so as to honor all of the Saints. The Saint did not allow unnecessary conversations in the sanctuary and personally made sure that the servers behaved as they should, compiling for them a rule of conduct, to which he strictly, yet affectionately, constrained adherence. After Liturgy Saint John remained in the sanctuary two or three hours, concerning which he once commented "How difficult it is to tear oneself from prayer and return to worldly affairs." At night he remained vigilant as opposed to sleeping. He never went "visiting" specifically, instead, he would appear unexpectedly to those in need, in any weather and at the most unusual hours. Daily he visited the sick with the Holy Gifts. Often he was seen, at some late hour, in inclement weather, walking on the streets of Shanghai with his bishop's staff in hand and his rassa blowing in the wind. When asked where he was headed in such weather, the Saint would reply, "Not too far away. I need to visit so-and-so," and when they escorted him to that place the "not too far away" was frequently two or three kilometers.

"While concerning oneself with the salvation of men's souls," said the Saint, "one needs to remember that people also have bodily needs which clamorously declare their presence. One cannot preach the Gospel without manifesting love in one's deeds." One of Saint John's manifestations of such love was the founding of the Orphanage of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk for orphans and children of needy parents. He called together some women and, with their help, began with eight little children and organized an orphanage which gave refuge to many hundreds of children in its fifteen-year existence in Shanghai. Vladyka himself gathered sickly and hungry children from the streets and from the dark alleys of Shanghai. Once he brought in a little girl to the orphanage, having "bought" her from a chunaman for a bottle of vodka.

The parishioners of the Shanghai diocese had deep feelings of love and respect for their archpastor, as is evident from the following excerpts from a letter written by them to Metropolitan Meletius in 1943.

"We, worldly people, laymen, cannot touch his (Saint John's) breadth of knowledge of theology, his erudition, his homilies, deeply penetrated with apostolic faith, pronounced almost daily and often printed. We, the people of Shanghai, will speak about what we see and feel in our multi-racial city from the day of arrival of our Bishop, that which we see with our sinful eyes and that which we feel with our Christian heart."

"From the day of his arrival the sorrowful phenomenon of the division of churches has ceased, the Orphanage of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk which currently feeds, clothes and educates 200 children was built from nothing, gradually the conditions of the alms house in the name of Saint Philaret the Merciful have improved, the sick in all Shanghai hospitals are visited by priests, are administered the Holy Mysteries on a timely basis and, in the event of death even the homeless are buried with a proper funeral, the mentally ill, who are located in a hospital far from the city, are



Seated from left to right: Archbishop Melety and Bishop John of Shanghai, 1935.

visited by him personally, those incarcerated in the prisons of the "Settlement" and the French Concession have the opportunity to pray in the place of their imprisonment during the Divine Liturgy and to receive Holy Communion monthly. He directs serious attention to the upbringing and education of the youth in a strict Orthodox and nationalistic spirit. In many of the non-Russian schools our children are now taught the Law of God. During all of the difficult moments in the life of our community we see him, leading the way, defending

us and our age-old Russian moral principles to the end. All of the sectarian organizations and heterodox confessions now understand that to combat such a pillar of the Orthodox Faith is very difficult. Our Bishop tirelessly visits the churches, hospitals, schools, prisons, civil and military organizations, always bringing with him reassurance and faith. From the day of his arrival not one infirm person has been left without his prayer and personal visit. By the prayers of our Luminary many have received relief and health. He, like a torch, illuminates our sinfulness, like a pealing bell awakens our conscience, and calls our souls to the Christian struggle, calls to us, as the Good Pastor, so that for a minute we might be diverted from the earth, from worldly corruption, and lift up our eyes to heaven, from whence our help comes. He is the one, according to the words of Apostle Paul, who is an example in word, in life, in purity, in spirit, in faith, in purity (1 Tim. 4:12)"



His flock was not mistaken in giving such a great assessment of the work of its pastor. People truly felt in him a readiness "to lay down his life" for the flock. During the Japanese occupation when two presidents of the Russian Emigration Committee were killed in succession and fear gripped the Russian colony Saint John, despite the undoubted danger to himself declared himself the temporary head of the Russian colony.

After the repose of Metropolitan Meletius and the end of the war in 1945, increased pressure was put upon the Russian emigrant clergy by the Moscow Patriarchate, with the aim of subordinating them to the new Moscow Patriarch Alexei I. He was the successor to Patriarch Sergius who, in 1927, promulgated the declaration committing the Church to cooperation with the Soviet authorities. In the Far East almost all of the hierarchs subordinated themselves to the newly chosen Patriarch. Saint John, having denied such subordination, was exposed to extremely great pressure and threats from his ruling bishop, Archbishop Victor. The Saint's response to these threats was simple: "I am subject to the Synod Abroad and I shall walk on the path that it directs for me."

After a long delay caused by the war an order arrived from the Synod of Bishops elevating Bishop John to Archbishop with direct submission to the Synod. The Chinese National Government and the city authorities acknowledged Archbishop John as the sole head of the Russian Orthodox Church in China.

The miracle-working power and clairvoyance of Saint John were well known in Shanghai. Once during Bright Week, Saint John came to the Jewish hospital to visit the Orthodox patients there. Passing through one ward, he stopped in front of a screen, concealing the bed upon which an elderly Jewish woman lay dying. Her family members were awaiting her death nearby. The Saint raised a cross above the screen and loudly proclaimed "Christ is Risen!" upon which the dying woman regained consciousness and asked for water. The Saint approached the nurse and said, "the patient wants to drink." The medical staff was stunned by the change which had taken place in one who only moments earlier was dying. Soon the woman recovered and was discharged from the hospital. Such incidents were numerous.

It so happened that Saint John was urgently called to administer Holy Communion to a dying man in the hospital. Having taken the Holy Gifts, the Saint headed there with another clergyman. When they arrived they saw a young man, about 20 years of age, playing on a harmonica. He had already recovered and was to leave the hospital shortly. The Saint called him over saying: "I want to give you Holy Communion right now." The young man immediately came up to him, confessed, and received Holy Communion. The amazed clergyman asked Saint John why he did not go to the one dying, but detained himself with an obviously healthy young

man. The Saint answered simply, "He will die tonight, but the other, who is seriously ill, will live yet many years." That is precisely what came to pass. The Lord manifested similar miracles in Europe and America through His Saint.

At the end of the 1940's as the communists came to power, Russians in China were forced to flee again, most via the Philippine Islands. In 1949 almost 5000 refugees from China were located in a camp of the International Refugee Organization on the island of Tubabao. They lived there in tents under the most primitive circumstances. All of the children of the orphanage were brought there, as were the elderly and infirm. They lived under the continual threat of fierce hurricanes, since the island is



*The Russian Camp on the Island of Tubabao*

located in the path of seasonal typhoons which pass through that part of the Pacific Ocean. During the twenty-seven-month existence of the Russian encampment, only once was the island threatened by a typhoon which, however, changed its course and passed around the island. Every night Saint John would walk around the entire camp blessing it with the sign of the Cross on all four sides. Later, when the people had departed for various countries and the camp had been almost completely evacuated, a fierce typhoon swept over the camp and leveled it to the ground.

More than once Saint John had to appear before representatives of civil authority so intercede for the needs of the Russian refugees. It was recommended to Saint John that he personally petition in Washington D.C., so that those in the camp could come to America. He flew to

Washington and, contrary to all human obstacles, as immigration laws changed and the exodus of his flock.

In 1951 Saint John was assigned to oversee the new Diocese. At first he administered the diocese from



*Church of the Resurrection of Christ in the city of Tientsin on the day of the Church's Consecration in 1955. From left to right: Bishop Leonty (Bartoshevitch), Archbishop John (Maximovitch), and the Parish Priest Hieromonk Mitrophan (Edlinsky, Manual).*

Brussels. He continually traveled throughout Europe serving Divine Liturgy in French and Dutch, and, as before, in Greek, Chinese, and later in English. The following was written about him in Paris: "He lives outside of our plane (of existence). It is no accident that in one of the Catholic churches a priest said, addressing the youth: 'You require proof. You say that there are no more miracles, no saints. Why do you need theoretical proof, when a living Saint walks the streets of Paris, Saint Jean Pieds (Saint John the Barefoot)!'"

While in Europe, Saint John collected information on a number of ancient Saints venerated in the West but forgotten in the East. Upon his recommendation their veneration was restored and their names recorded in the Church calendar.

Saint John's spirituality, his knowledge of languages, and, most of all his example, attracted many French, Dutch and other Europeans to Orthodoxy. Such was the missionary significance of his stay in Europe.

In the Fall of 1962 Saint John arrived in his last Diocesan See and again, just as many years ago in his first Diocese, on the Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple. At first he came to assist the aging and infirm elder, Archbishop Tikhon and after his repose (March 17, 1963 o.s.) Saint John became ruling Archbishop of Western America and San Francisco. Again the Saint arrived to find an unfinished church, dedicated to the memory of the Mother of God, and once again, as in China, the Church was torn by discord.

Saint John's first priority was to resume and complete the construction of the new Diocesan Cathedral of the Most-Holy Theotokos "Joy of All Who Sorrow," which had been entirely halted due to a lack of funds and sharp disputes as to the solution of the financial dilemma paralyzing the church community. The Lord mercifully helped His Saint in this, who was suffering greatly as a result of this discord, yet continued both by prayer and by tirelessly overseeing the construction, to inspire everyone to sacrifice and work.

St John had to endure much at the time, even the necessity of appearing in an American civil court. The last years of his life were full of the bitterness of slander and persecution. Sometimes Saint John aroused envy, unfavorable criticisms, or bewilderment in people, when he dealt with them strictly adhering to church rules. At that time someone asked who was responsible for the division in the Church. The Saint answered simply: "the devil."

In 1964, construction of the largest church of the Russian Church Abroad in America, adorned with five golden domes, was essentially complete. The elevation of the magnificent crosses, the grandeur of which is visible when sailing in the San Francisco Bay, was preceded by a solemn procession (over a mile) with masses of people participating. The procession was almost canceled due to heavy rains, but the Saint, without any hesitation, led the procession with hymns into the drenched streets of the City. As the procession began the rain stopped. The crosses were blessed in front of the new cathedral and when the main cross was elevated, the sun broke through and a dove lighted upon the brightly shining symbol of Christ. This visible triumph of the elevating of Orthodox crosses, symbols of Christ's victory, shining on the hulls of a contempo-

rary Babylon where satanism has been openly professing victory of the life of the Saint on earth

While accompanying the Wonder-working Karsk Reborn, Most Holy Theotokos to Seattle, Saint John, having served there in the Saint Nicholas Cathedral, remained in the city for hours. It was the 19th of June (o.s.)

1966. Then, having visited some of his spiritual children who lived near the cathedral with the Wonder-working Icon, he proceeded to a room in the church house where he was staying. Suddenly, those accompanying the Archpastor heard the sound of someone falling to the floor. When they ran up the stairs they discovered him lying on the floor and already departing this world. They sat him up in an armchair before the Wonderworking Icon and the Saint peacefully reposed in the Lord. At that moment, his extraordinarily difficult struggle of depriving himself of rest and sleep ceased. They laid him on a bed that was in the room, a blessed berth, giving him rest and sleep after 40 years of abstinence.

"Sleep now in peace!" cried Archbishop Averky of Syracuse and Holy Trinity, who zealously loved him. In the conclusion of his

homily during the funeral he said: "Sleep now in peace, O our dear, beloved Vladyka. Rest from your righteous works and struggles. Rest in peace until the General Resurrection." The solemn funeral of Saint John took place on June 24, 1966(o.s.) in the Cathedral of the Most-Holy Theotokos, the Joy of All Who Sorrow, in the city of San Francisco. The funeral began at 6:00 p.m. and finished after 1:00 a.m., as a result of the multitude of people, who came to bid farewell to their reposed archpastor. Metropolitan Pluaret officiated at the funeral in concelebration with Archbishops Leonty and Averky, Bishops Sava and Nektary and a multitude of clergy.



*The Cathedral Church of "The Mother of God, Joy of All Who Sorrow," in San Francisco*



The air of the funeral was strikingly poignant and exaltingly prayerful. None of its participants shall ever forget it. Despite the deep sorrow of the countless admirers of Saint John, a kind of special joy predominated, enveloping all of the faithful.

The body of Saint John remained in an open casket in the cathedral for five days and, despite the hot summer weather, was untouched by even the slightest hint of corruption or stiffness. His hands were soft and pliant. And all of this, despite the fact that nothing whatsoever was done to his body at the mortuary.

The words of Bishop Ignaty (Brianchaninov) in his work, *Thoughts about Death*, involuntarily come to mind. "Have you ever seen the body of a righteous one, which has been abandoned by the soul? There is no smell of corruption. It is not frightening to be near it. During his burial sorrow is mixed with a kind of intangible joy." All of this, according to the words of the ever memorable Bishop Ignaty, is a sure sign that "the reposed one has obtained mercy and Grace from the Lord."

After his blessed repose, just as during his life, Saint John continues to perform various miracles and healings for those who turn to him with faith. People, during difficult moments in their lives, when no earthly power is capable of helping, have beseeched his intercession before the Lord. Letters, as well as prayer lists, have been placed under the miter on the tomb of the Saint and many have received the help for which they had hoped.

In the fall of the 1993 the Synod of Bishops charged the Archbishop of Western America and San Francisco, together with a commission comprised of two other archpastors, to examine Saint John's remains. In the evening of September 28, 1993 (o.s.), after a pannykhida served in the sepulcher by members of the commission, Archbishop Anthony gave a brief homily, calling all participants of this holy work to be reconciled and himself asking forgiveness of everyone, blessed those present to open the tomb. Having removed the lid of the sarcophagus, the participants withdrew the metal coffin of the Saint and noticed that in many places it had completely rusted through. With the fear of God and with prayer, they opened the coffin. The face of the Saint was covered and everyone immediately turned their attention to his white, incorrupt hands. Having prayed, Archbishop Anthony removed the "aer" from the brow of



*St. John always paid special attention to the least of his flock*

Vladyslav and exposed the incorrupt face of the God-glorified saint. At that moment a kind of supernatural spiritual peace, an extraordinary silence was felt. No one was amazed, no one spoke. All present were in a state of



*The Incorrupt Relics of Saint John,  
Which Rest in the San Francisco Cathedral*

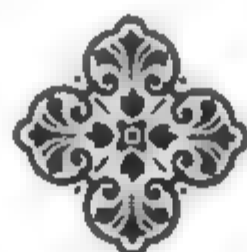
to vanish, such was the Grace-filled experience of standing beside the Saint's relics.

At the next meeting of the Synod of Bishops, Archbishop Anthony reported that the honorable relics of Saint John were examined by the Synodal Commission comprised of himself, Archbishop Laurus of Syracuse and Holy Trinity, Bishop Kyrill of Seattle and twelve other persons chosen by the diocesan bishop. Having heard Archbishop Anthony's

report and the Report of the Commission for the examination of the relics of Saint John, the Synod of Bishops blessed the continuation of the efforts in preparation of the Glorification of Saint John, which was scheduled for June 19 (o.s.), the day of his blessed repose.

In these frightening days of general apostasy from God, the Lord has not abandoned his people and has sent them a great intercessor. Standing before the throne of God is a courageous defender of the Church of Christ, a struggler and ascetic according to the tradition of the stylites who took upon themselves the strictest form of self-mortification and, at times, taking upon themselves "foolishness for Christ's sake," which exceeds the wisdom of this world, a good and loving pastor who laid down his life for his sheep; a teacher and nurturer of Orthodox youth; a miracle-worker and unmercenary healer, an apostle and missionary; a deep theologian, a beholder of mysteries and a hierarch of universal significance, who unwaveringly followed that which he had promised before God and men in his testimony read during his election to the episcopacy: "What greater benefit can one bring to one's neighbor, other than to prepare him for eternal life..."

Through the prayers of our holy father John, may the Lord God preserve us from every evil, strengthen our faith, and help us to journey upon the true path to salvation. To our God, Who is wondrous in His Saints, be all glory, honor, and worship, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



# The Russian Church Abroad

## *A Short History of the ROCCOR*

by Saint John  
of Shanghai and San Francisco

**T**he Russian Church Abroad is that part of the Russian Orthodox Church situated outside the borders of the Russian state and headed at the present time by a Chief Hierarch and Synod of Bishops chosen by the Council of Bishops of the Russian diaspora.

A part of the Russian Orthodox Church has existed abroad already for about two centuries. The preaching of Christianity to the pagan tribes of Asia entailed the founding of missions, which in the course of time became dioceses, in China and Japan. The spreading of Orthodoxy among the pagan population of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska and the founding of a mission in North America, which afterwards became a diocese, was a continuation of the preaching in Asia.

Beginning in the eighteenth century, Russian churches were established in Western Europe, at first at Russian embassies, and afterwards in places most visited by Russians during trips abroad. All of these churches were considered to be under the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan of Petrograd and recently before the Revolution were directly administered by his vicar, the Bishop of Kronstadt. None of the Eastern Patriarchs, whose authority has been highly respected by the Russian people, and likewise none of the other heads of the Orthodox Churches, ever protested against such a spreading of the Russian Church. If according to the Church canons a duration of thirty years is sufficient to cause a church or a place to belong to that diocese which in the course of those years was in possession of it, then all the more must one recognize as undisputed the right of the Russian Church to those places that have been cared for by her for many decades. One may say quite certainly that this question would never have been raised if the Russian Empire and with it the Russian



*The Miracle-Working Kursk Root Icon of the Sign,  
the Protectress of the Russian Diaspora*

Church had remained in its former power and glory, and if misfortune had not befallen them

After the collapse of the monarchy, at first the Russian Church within and without Russia continued to enjoy her former rights. But this did not last long, and soon her persecution began. The Communist government, which came to power, set itself the aim of uprooting all religion, which according to Marxist teaching is prejudice and superstition. The



main blow was directed at the Orthodox Church, to which the overwhelming majority of the Russian people belonged and which had inspired them over the centuries since the very Baptism of Russia. The closing of churches and the persecution and murder of clergy began, which then turned into a systematic struggle against the Church with the aim of annihilating it.

Foreseeing the possibility that the Higher Church Authority would be deprived of freedom, and the impossibility for separate parts of the Russian Church to have contact with it, Patriarch Tikhon, who then headed it, issued an edict in 1920, according to which temporary church administrations should be established under the headship of the eldest of the hierarchs on territories separated from the central administration. Church administrations had been established in the south of Russia and in Siberia — in places not having contact with Moscow by reason of the civil war. And



*The Hiero-Confessor Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) at the All-Russian Council of 1917-1918*

when there followed the great exodus of Russians from their fatherland after the defeat of those troops which had struggled with the Communist regime, then the Higher Church Administration of South Russia, headed by Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), who was known to the whole Orthodox world, also found itself abroad.

The hierarchs who arrived in Constantinople immediately appealed to the Locum Tenens of the Ecumenical Throne, Metropolitan Dorotheus of Prussa, of blessed memory, with a request to permit them to continue to take care of their Russian flock. Permission was granted to them by an act of the 29th of December 1920. At the beginning of the next year, 1921, at the invitation of the Serbian Patriarch Demetrius, Metropolitan Anthony and the Higher Administration of the Russian Church Abroad moved to Serbia. All the Russian hierarchs of the Russian Church and all the parts of the Russian Church outside the borders of the Russian state then united around him. The churches that had been under the jurisdiction of

the vicar of the Metropolitan of Petrograd were entrusted to Archbishop Eulogius by the Temporary Higher Church Administration. This assignment was confirmed afterwards by Patriarch Tikhon. The ecclesiastical missions in the Far East (China and Japan), and also the bishops who had moved from Russia to Manchuria, acknowledged themselves as subject to the Church Administration Abroad that had been formed. In accordance with the desire of Patriarch Tikhon, one of the bishops who had arrived in Constantinople from the south of Russia (Metropolitan Platon) was assigned to America by the same Administration. Both our ecclesiastical mission in Jerusalem and a protopresbyter in Argentina were subject to the Administration.

The Higher Church Administration, which had originated in the south of Russia in areas then free from the Soviet regime, which conformed to Patriarch Tikhon's later Edict No. 362, of the 7th of November 1920; which was recognized by the Locum Tenens of the Ecumenical Throne, Metropolitan Dorotheus, and was received in a brotherly way by Patriarch Demetrius of Serbia, indeed became the higher Church authority for all of the Russian churches situated outside the borders of Russia.

The Higher Church Administration, which at first, besides bishops, also included representatives of the clergy and laity, acknowledged Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow as its supreme Hierarchy, and viewed its forced separation from him as temporary, and considered itself accountable before a future All-Russian Council after the liberation of Russia from the godless regime. Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow recognized the assignments made by the Higher Church Administration Abroad and even gave it instructions: in accordance with the desire of Patriarch Tikhon, Metropolitan Platon, who had arrived at Constantinople from the south of Russia, was assigned to America by the same Administration. At his order an investigation of the rector of the church in Copenhagen, Bishop Anthony, who had been consecrated in Belgrade, was conducted by the Administration Abroad.

In November of 1921, in Sremsky Carlovtsy in Yugoslavia, the First Council Abroad took place, in which, besides twenty-four bishops, representatives of the clergy and laity took part.

As the voice of all Russians who were free from Soviet rule, the Council considered itself obligated to express itself on the situation in Russia, where all the rest of the population of Russia was languishing under the oppression of that regime. The Council appealed to the Genoa Conference with a request not to support the Bolshevik regime and to help the Russian people become free of it.

The Bolshevik regime, interpreting this as a threat to itself, decided to exert pressure on the Russians who were abroad through the Moscow Church authority. Under strong pressure from the Soviet government,

Patriarch Tikhon signed an edict to abolish the Higher Church Administration, entrusting to Metropolitan Evlogius the responsibility for organizing a new one. After this, Patriarch Tikhon was immediately arrested.

Obedient to his previous order of 7-20 November 1925, the hierarchs abroad assembled in a council on the 31st of August 1926 and elected that a synod of bishops be formed in place of the Higher Church Administration. Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev, as the eldest in rank who had occupied the oldest Russian cathedra and had been, besides the Patriarch, the sole permanent member of the Russian Synod (in Russia before the revolution), was elected as its president.

All Russian churches submitted to the Synod of Bishops, as earlier they had to the Higher Church Administration, and the elected Synod of Bishops became the recognized Church authority abroad. The Synod and the Council of Bishops continued to consider themselves and the churches under their jurisdiction as an inseparable part of the Russian Church. In accordance with the Russian custom, in all the Russian churches abroad the name of Patriarch Tikhon was commemorated at the divine services, and after him — the name of the head of the Church abroad, Metropolitan Anthony.

The President of the Synod of Bishops abroad, Metropolitan Anthony, who after the arrest of Patriarch Tikhon remained the eldest Russian hierarch of those who were in freedom, rose to the defense of the persecuted Russian Church. In his epistles to the Most Holy Patriarchs and to the non-Orthodox entrusted to govern, he explained the Russian Church's true situation, which had often reached them in a distorted form. The consequence of his appeal to the Archbishop of Canterbury was the English government's intervention in Patriarch Tikhon's fate, and he was released from confinement when his trial had already been set and the indictment had been drawn up with the aim of sentencing him to death.

After the death of Patriarch Tikhon, the Russian Church Abroad acknowledged Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa as *Locum Tenens* of the Patriarchal Throne. He was soon arrested and sent into banishment for his firmness and unwillingness to make concessions to the godless regime. The Church in Russia and abroad continued to consider him as her head and his name was commemorated at the divine services in all churches. Metropolitan Sergius became the Deputy of the *Locum Tenens* after the latter's arrest. At that time, some disagreements arose among the Russian hierarchs abroad, and an appeal was made to Metropolitan Sergius with a request that he decide the disputed questions, which allowed Metropolitan Sergius to express his view on the situation of the part of the Russian Church that was abroad. Addressing the bishops who were abroad with a general letter, on the 12th of September 1926 he wrote:

My dear hierarchs, you ask me to be a judge in a matter of which I completely have no knowledge. Can the Moscow Patriarch, in general, be the leader of the ecclesiastical life of Orthodox emigrants? The good of church affairs demands that you, by common consent, establish for yourselves a central organ of church administration that is sufficiently authoritative to resolve all misunderstandings and disagreements and has the power to cut short any misunderstanding and every disobedience without resorting to our support. "In this letter, which is filled with love for his colleagues abroad, he says, "We shall hardly see one another again in the present life, but I hope, by God's mercy, that we shall see one another in the life to come."

That was Metropolitan Sergius' last letter in which he freely wrote what he realized within himself to be true. Imprisonment, threats with regard not only to himself, but to the whole Russian Church as well, and the Soviet regime's false promises broke him, within a few months after his letter, so abundant in love, to the hierarchs abroad, which was, as it were, a testament before his loss of inner freedom. Metropolitan Sergius issued a declaration in which he recognized the Soviet regime as a genuinely legitimate Russian regime, which cares for the people's good, a regime "whose joys are our joys and whose sorrows are our sorrows" (Declaration of 16/29 July 1927). At the same time, in accordance with a promise made by him to the Soviet regime, Metropolitan Sergius demanded of the clergy abroad their signatures of loyalty to the Soviet government.

This document [the above mentioned edict of Metropolitan Sergius] was in complete contradiction with his view expressed nine months before this, that the Moscow Patriarchate could not direct the ecclesiastical life of the emigrants. If for those who were in Russia, who were enduring grievous sufferings, there might be circumstances that would mitigate their moral capitulation to the cruel regime (Church canons during persecutions even mitigated the penances of those who renounced Christ after grievous sufferings), for those who were in freedom and in comparative safety there were no mitigating circumstances whatsoever or justification or even common sense in such a signature. Metropolitan Sergius himself hardly expected that anyone abroad would submit to his edict, and he did this manifestly in order to fulfill the demand of the Soviet regime and thereby divest himself of responsibility. However, Metropolitan Eulogius with his vicars and Bishop Benjamin of Sevastopol did indeed submit to the edict. Meanwhile, in Russia itself there were courageous confessors from among the imprisoned bishops and likewise among those who remained in freedom, who declared to Metropolitan Sergius their denouncement of the agreement with the godless regime which persecuted the Church. Many of them even broke off communion

in prayer with Metropolitan Sergius, as one who had "fallen" and had entered into league with the godless, and a part of the clergy and laity in Russia followed them. The godless Soviet regime cruelly persecuted such steadfast hierarchs and their followers. The Soviet regime, not having fulfilled its promises to Metropolitan Sergius, which had prompted him to enter into agreement with it, was at the same time also depriving of freedom, banishing, and even executing many who did not recognize his declaration.

Among the persons who did not recognize Metropolitan Sergius' declaration of loyalty to the Soviet regime were the *Locum Tenens* of the Patriarchal Throne, Metropolitan Peter, (Metropolitan Sergius was his deputy), Metropolitan Agathangel of Yaroslavl and Cyril of Kazan, who had been indicated by Patriarch Tikhon as possible *Locum Tenens* of the Patriarchal Throne in case Peter should be unable to exercise his office, Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd, and many other well-known hierarchs. Indeed, Metropolitan Sergius himself had still been like-minded with them not long before the signing of the declaration for the reasons indicated above.

The declaration of Metropolitan Sergius brought no benefit to the Church. The persecutions not only did not cease, but sharply increased. To the number of other accusations brought by the Soviet regime against clergy and laymen, one more was added — nonrecognition of the declaration. At the same time, a wave of church closings rolled over all Russia. In the course of a few years almost all churches were closed, destroyed or put to various other uses. Whole provinces remained without a single church. Concentration camps and places of forced labor held thousands of clergymen, a significant part of whom never saw freedom again, being executed there or dying from excessive labors and deprivations. Even the children of priests and all believing laymen were persecuted.



*The brutish authorities conspired to throw Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa from a train travelling at full speed. The Metropolitan fell into a deep snow drift where a friendly bear found him.*



The Russian Church Abroad was spiritually one with those persecuted believers. Except for the few hierarchs already mentioned, all the rest, headed by Metropolitan Anthony, flatly refused to give a signature of loyalty to the Soviet regime and came forward with a striking denunciation of the declaration and the position of Metropolitan Sergius.

Moreover, Metropolitan Anthony, who very much loved Metropolitan Sergius and was inwardly suffering for his beloved disciple and friend, wrote him personally a letter of admonition (in which he showed the scale of the harm to the Church that the declaration was bringing) which probably never reached him or in any case could no longer influence his behavior.

Just as the hierarchs and flock of the Russian Church inside Russia that did not recognize the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, so too her part abroad never ceased to belong to the Russian Church. As before, they all remained in spiritual unity with the Locum Tenens of the Patriarchal Throne, Metropolitan Peter, who was languishing in the far north wilderness. His name was commemorated in all the churches of the Russian Diaspora. In all its churches supplications were raised up for the brethren suffering in the homeland, for its deliverance from the godless regime and for the repose of those martyred by the regime.

Meanwhile, Metropolitan Eulogius, who had submitted his signature of loyalty to the Soviet regime which was demanded by Metropolitan Sergius, was invited to a prayer service organized in England for the suffering Russian Church, and he took part in it. This was interpreted as an act against the Soviet government, and he was forbidden to serve by Metropolitan Sergius. Not wishing to submit to this edict, but at the same time not wishing to acknowledge his guilt before the Russian Synod Abroad, Metropolitan Eulogius appealed to the Patriarch of Constantinople with a request for the temporary reception of him and his flock into the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. The request was accepted.

Despite his and Metropolitan Platon's departure with their followers from the unity of the Church Abroad and, one may say, from the Russian Church altogether, the Russian Church Abroad till this day remains the free part of the Russian Church. She has enjoyed the regard of the Most Holy Patriarchs and the other hierarchs of her sister Orthodox Churches. Particular attention and care were allotted to her by Patriarch Varnava of Serbia, who tried to reunite to the Russian Church Abroad the bishops (Metropolitan Eulogius and Metropolitan Platon with their vicars) who had broken off from her, and he offered to be an intermediary between her and Metropolitan Sergius, whom he honored and loved as his former rector at the Academy. However, he soon was convinced that Metropolitan Sergius was in the hands of the Church's enemies and that his actions were harmful to her, concerning which he even wrote to him directly.

Patriarch Varnava, during a service in the Holy Trinity Russian Church on 9-22 July 1930 addressed the Russian emigrants, to which he said:

"Know that the fanatics who are persecuting the Church torturing her, but are trying to divide her, to distribute her, means they stretch out their criminal hands to you who are the boundaries of your fatherland. You, the loyal sons of the Church, remember that you are the sole support of the great Russian Church, and at all cost cease ecclesiastical dissensions sown by the enemies of your fatherland. In your midst is a great hierarch, Metropolitan Anthony, who is an adornment of the Universal Orthodox Church. Let us all, of one mind, like unto the first hierarchs of the Church of Christ at the beginning of Christianity. In him also lies Church truth, and those who have separated from him should return to him. All of you, not only those living in our fatherland, Yugoslavia, but also those who are in America, in Asia, in all the countries of the world, should constitute, with your great archpastor Metropolitan Anthony as head, a single indestructible whole, which does not give in to the attacks and provocations of the Church's enemies. I, as the Serbian Patriarch, and now your own brother, fervently pray to God that He unite the Russian people who are abroad into a single whole, so that Russia might arise such as she was when headed by the Orthodox Autocratic Tsar, and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and of all His saints, I bless you with my patriarchal blessing."

Patriarch Varnava took an active part in the affairs of the Russian Church Abroad, convoking under his presidency conferences of the representatives of the various church provinces abroad, with the aim of halting disagreements, stopping schism, and returning to the Church Abroad those who had departed from her. With his participation and under his presidency, the "Statute of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad" was completed in 1935, which was signed by him and by the Russian hierarchs. It became the basis for administering the Russian Church Abroad.

Patriarch Gregory of Antioch displayed the very same attitude, so abundant in love, toward the Russian Church Abroad, always rendering support to her, and donating the means for publishing the Orthodox Catechism compiled by Metropolitan Anthony. The Most Holy Patriarch of Alexandria was always in communion with the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, rendering brotherly support to her and respecting her chief hierarch as her lawful head. The Most Blessed Patriarch of Jerusalem likewise not only permitted the activities of the Russian Church within the boundaries of his Patriarchate, but even called upon her to participate in the affairs of the Patriarchate. Thus, having need, because of certain difficulties that had arisen, to consecrate new bishops, he invited Archbishop Anastassy, subsequently Metropolitan and Chief Hierarch of the Russ-

ian Church Abroad, who was in Jerusalem to celebrate with the Most Blessed Patriarch Timothy was one of the bishops consecrated jointly by Patriarch Damian and Metropolitan Anastassy. The Archbishop of Mount Sinai was always in communion with the Russian Church Abroad. The Church of Bulgaria was in brotherly union with her. Within the boundaries of the Local Churches, the Russian Church Abroad cared for her spiritual children in accordance with an agreement with the hierarchy



*At the Celebration Marking the 50th Anniversary of Metropolitan Anthony's Service to the Church as a Clergyman, 1935. From left to right: Archbishop Anastassy (Gribanovsky), Patriarch Varnava of Serbia, Metropolitan Anthony and Metropolitan Elias of Lebanon*

of those Churches and acted completely independently within the bounds established for her, continuing to exercise the rights of the Russian Church previously granted to her.

In 1935, the fiftieth anniversary of the service to the Church of the head of the Russian Church Abroad, Metropolitan Anthony, was celebrated. The celebration of this jubilee assumed the character of a great festival of the Orthodox Church. Not only the Serbian Church participated, within whose boundaries it took place, but there came to Belgrade representatives of various other Churches. From the Church of Antioch there came Metropolitan Elias of Lebanon. Other representatives came from all corners of the earth.

In the next year, 1926, Metropolitan Anthony, reposed. Metropolitan Anastassy, who had been nominated beforehand and approved by the Council of Russian hierarchs abroad, became his successor.

At first this change did not bring any alterations in the Russian Church Abroad. She continued to exist and function, being guided by the "statute" which had been accepted and confirmed by the Synod of Patriarch Varnava. Everywhere she enjoyed the same rights.

In 1937, the *Locum Tenens* [of the Russian Patriarchal Throne] Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa, died in banishment, and apparently not long before that, or soon afterwards, the second of the three candidates for the position of *Locum Tenens*, Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan, likewise died in banishment. [The first candidate, Metropolitan Agathangel, had died still earlier, in 1928.] The Patriarchal Synod of Moscow, composed of bishops invited by Metropolitan Sergius, confirmed him as *Locum Tenens* of the Patriarchal Throne. At that time, the Russian Church inside Russia was in a state of extreme desolation. There were only twenty hierarchs in freedom, and the majority of the churches was closed, destroyed, or used for blasphemous purposes. Whole provinces and vast expanses did not have a single church. Relics and wonderworking icons were taken to museums. The majority of the clergy that remained was in banishment, at forced labor, or lived, concealing their rank, by earning a pitiful subsistence for themselves by any kind of work and only secretly performing divine services at the homes of faithful laymen.

At the same time Metropolitan Sergius continued to affirm that there was no persecution against the Church in Russia. The Russian Church Abroad, which was not subject to Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod, remained in her previous relationship to him, i.e., did not recognize Sergius or his Synod. However she continued to feel herself spiritually united with the suffering Mother Church, and as before, continued to offer prayers for her and the suffering brethren.

In 1939, the Second World War began, into which Russia, governed by the Soviet regime, was also drawn. The people expected that the war would bring liberation from the Soviet regime; and at the beginning of the war whole divisions surrendered, not wishing to defend their oppressor. However, when the people understood that war was being waged against Russia, which the Germans wished to subject to themselves, they rose up in defense of the Fatherland. The Soviet government took advantage of the popular outburst. Seeing that the faith hidden in the people began to burst out irrepressibly during the war and that there was no possibility of holding it back, — because it was still, just as before, the chief inner strength of millions of Russians — the Soviet regime decided to make concessions for the time being, and, by showing concern for the Church

to make the people its ally in the difficult struggle in which it could easily have been crushed without their support. Some closed churches were opened, and a part of the relics that had been taken to museums was returned. This was only a small part of the holy objects and church property that had been seized by the Soviets, however, many people saw in this a change in the relationship of the Soviet regime to the Church.

The Soviet government permitted the election of a patriarch to be held and allowed some outward freedom for the Church, however, in essence, it did not alleviate the Church's situation in the least. The Patriarch and his Synod were under the strict supervision of the regime and could not accomplish anything without the knowledge of the representative of the Soviet regime — the chairman of the Council for Orthodox Church Affairs — and they had to follow his instructions. In this there is no resemblance whatever to the situation of the Holy Synod in the times of the Tsars. The Russian Tsar and his government were Orthodox and strove for the good of the Church; and if, even then, there were instances when the representatives of the regime, the Ober-procurators, did not correctly understand the interest of the Church and their actions were harmful for her — nonetheless, these were isolated instances, harmful in themselves, but not representing any systematic destruction of the Church.

Now, however, the Soviet government is Communist, godless in its foundation and idea, and has set itself the aim of annihilating every religion as superstition and implanting atheism. There can be temporary concessions, there can be various tactical movements, but the fundamental goal remains unchanged. Making use of the Church authority and the Church for the attainment of its own different political aims, the Soviet government is preparing beforehand a blow to be delivered to the Church when it shall find this possible and convenient. We see proofs and examples of such flexibility of Soviet politics in every sphere. When it was necessary, the Soviet government took broad advantage of the patriotism of the Russian people and put itself forth as an authentically Russian government, but the war had not even been finished when the Russian patriotic slogans were thrown out, the government put in the first place the international politics and aims of Communism, although for the time being it did not completely renounce historical Russian aims that were useful for it at that time. Again, permitting an increase in the influence of the army and its officers during the war, the Soviet government later separated itself from the generals who had become popular and sent into exile many outstanding soldiers, declaring that the whole success of the war should be ascribed to the Communist Party. Yet again, having entered into friendly relations with various governments, the Soviet leaders subsequently turned abruptly about and began to cover with dirt those whom they had embraced. While during the war it had called peo-

ple to support the fullness and glory of the homeland. All this the Soviet government put to death many distinguished Russian people.

So also in its relationship to the Church the Communist regime is in contradiction to its fundamental world-view. It supports the Church, having in mind to destroy everything that is now permitted for the very Church herself, when she shall cease to be useful to it.

Why at the present time [1960] does the Soviet regime give the appearance of benevolence toward the Church? First, because it does not feel itself to be sufficiently strong to engage in a struggle with the believing people inside Russia and enter into conflict with them, especially in view of the possibility of international complications. Second, because for the time being it needs a cover for its real aims, and it uses the clergy to create a good opinion of itself among free peoples. Third, because with the clergy under its control the Soviet government wishes to exert influence on the Russian Diaspora and keep the Russian emigration in its hands. Knowing that Russians primarily unite themselves around the Church, the Soviet government, not having the power now to destroy the Church, wishes for the time being to have influence through her on those who are not subject to it: holding the clergy in its hands, by this very fact it calculates on beginning to act on the flock as well. From this comes the demand through the head of the Church that is subject to it, of a signature of loyalty to the Soviet regime on the part of all clergy. Was such a demand lawful and could it be fulfilled?

Russians outside of Russia are not subjects of the Soviet regime. While remaining faithful to our fatherland, we do not recognize as legitimate a government that goes against the thousand-year world-view of our people, and we have gone abroad in order not to submit to it. Why, then, should the hierarchs and the rest of the clerics promise loyalty to it? Does the Archbishop of Constantinople, the Ecumenical Patriarch, demand loyalty to the Turkish government from his flock of Greek and other nationalities that is in America and other parts of the world? Does the Patriarch of Antioch, whose patriarchate embraces Syria and Lebanon, demand loyalty to one or the other government from people not subject to them? Did the Most Holy Russian Synod demand loyalty to the Russian government, or even to the Most Pious Emperor himself, from the Orthodox who were citizens of America or were subjects of other states?

During the Russo-Japanese War, the enlightener of Japan, the Russian Archbishop Nicholas, while remaining in Japan, blessed the Orthodox Japanese warriors who went to war to fight for their fatherland. Although he himself did not personally perform divine services, since he could not pray for victory over his native Russia, he nonetheless permitted the Japanese clergy subject to him to do so. After the end of the war, he was



decorated by the Most Holy Russian Synod and by the Russian Tsar himself for fulfilling his pastoral duty. If the Most Pious Tsar and the Most Holy Governing Synod acted thus, then does anyone have the right and is there any moral justice therein, to demand from people who are struggling against the godless regime, submission to it through their spiritual pastors?

When the Serbian Patriarch Arsenius III, and after him Arsenius IV, with their flock left their fatherland, which was under the rule of the Turks, and settled in another country, the archpastors and pastors of the resettled Serbs did not submit any more to the new patriarchs of Serbia, which was enslaved by the Turks, in order to be free.

Did not something similar happen in Greece? Why was the Hellenic Church formed and why does it exist as autocephalous, even though its territory has from time immemorial formed part of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople? When in 1819-1820 there was a rebellion of the Greeks against the Turks, the Turkish government demanded of the Patriarch the excommunication of the rebellious Greeks, and the Patriarch fulfilled this. Although the Greeks knew well that he was only outwardly fulfilling what had been demanded of him, while remaining heart and soul with them, nonetheless, having declared his interdicts invalid they began ecclesiastically to administer themselves independently of him, and with the formation of the Hellenic state, the independent Hellenic Church was established. For about thirty years the Archbishop of Constantinople and the Hellenic Synod had no communion among themselves, until relations were established between the Patriarchal and Hellenic Churches as between independent churches. Until recent times, Greeks who were living in other countries were cared for by the Hellenic Church, and only after the First World War, when Turkey was half destroyed and weakened, did the Greeks in the diaspora again become the spiritual flock of the Ecumenical Patriarch. However, the Hellenic Church even now remains autocephalous and, after the Balkan and the two World Wars, new territories that were annexed to Greece, which of old had belonged to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, have entered into her, while the Archbishop of Athens has received the title of Most Blessed. Evidently, only when Constantinople will again become the capital of the Greek kingdom — if by God's mercy that will be — will these two Greek Churches merge anew, just as all the separated parts of the Serbian Church were united when all the Serbian territories had been liberated and were united into one state.

If strivings to preserve spiritual freedom and to guard oneself from every influence of regimes which, even though non-Christian, yet all the same still honored God in their own way, and which, although they restricted the freedom of Christians, yet allowed open persecution only at

times, were the cause of an outward separation of parts from the Mother Church, then it is even more just, permissible and natural to preserve the faithful from every pressure of a government which has openly set itself the aim of struggling against religion, against superstition and which systematically strives to annihilate it.

The gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church. The Church has experienced terrible persecutions and has endured them being crowned by a choir of new martyrs. But the Church has never desired persecutions and has prayed for deliverance from them and from temptations. She has prayed that the persecutors fail, and it is well known that Julian the Apostate perished while Saint Basil the Great was praying for the preservation of the Church from him.

Who needs the annihilation of the Russian Church Abroad?

Russian exiles? The Russian Diaspora? After all, it is precisely the Church Abroad that gives the Diaspora spiritual power, that unites and preserves it from completely disappearing, with the loss of the Orthodox faith and together with it of the whole Russian culture created by Orthodoxy. Only the enemies of the Russian people can desire this.

Does the Russian Church inside Russia need, would she benefit from the annihilation of the Russian Church Abroad and her annexation to the Patriarchal Church?

The Russian Church Abroad is not spiritually separated from her suffering Mother. She offers up prayers for her, preserves her spiritual and maternal wealth, and in due time will unite with her, when the reasons that disunite them will have vanished. There is no doubt that also within Russia many hierarchs, clerics and laymen are with us and would themselves be glad to act as we do, if they were able.

The cessation of the separate existence of the Church Abroad is needful and advantageous only to the Soviet government. Through the clergy, it wants to have control over the emigration and influence over it. Emigrants who would not desire to be under the spiritual leadership of pastors dependent upon the Soviets, when left without the Church would dissipate and would no longer be dangerous for the Soviet regime. The clergy in Russia, especially the hierarchy, are hostages for the emigration. If, when there was no basis whatsoever for making Patriarch Tikhon responsible for the actions of the hierarchy abroad, he was accused of this — then with its submission, the Patriarch would bear full responsibility. When faced with the statements of Russian emigrants against the Soviet regime, the latter would not hesitate to hang the Patriarch from the gates of the Kremlin, just as the Turks hanged Patriarch Gregory V from the gates of the Patriarchate.

Without having visible contacts with her Church in the Fatherland, the Russian Church Abroad is in spiritual communion with all who suffer and are persecuted there, who languish in bonds and banishment.

We believe and know that the Orthodox faith is strong in Russia.

The Lord God, Who preserved seven thousand men who did not bend the knee to Baal in the days of Elias, today also has a multitude of His servants who secretly serve and pray to Him throughout the whole expanse of the Russian Land. Even among the hierarchs outwardly subject to the Soviet regime, many are inwardly tormented by this; when the opportunity comes, they will act according to the example of those at the Council of Chalcedon who declared with tears that they had given their signatures at the Robber Council under coercion, following the example of the Most Holy Patriarch Paul, who was tortured by his conscience and took the Schema in recognition of his weakness under the Iconoclasts. Concerning this, a multitude of those who left the Homeland during the Second World War and after it testify. The Soviets know this also, and they keep them all under open and secret surveillance, especially those who are temporarily allowed abroad.

But at the same time there are manifestations of the opposite case. Just recently, a professor at the Theological Academy, Archpriest Osipov, who several days before this had occupied a prominent position in the clergy, published a terrible blasphemy against God and faith in Christ. With him, certain other clergymen proved to be in agreement, who, by an enactment of the Moscow Patriarchal Synod on the 30th December 1959, were expelled from their rank and deprived of all ecclesiastical communion. "They went out from us, but they were not of us", the enactment states in the words of Sacred Scripture (1 John 2:19). Undoubtedly, besides these who have already been uncovered, there are still other secret enemies of the Church as well, who for the time being are pretending to be her loyal sons in order subsequently to bring disgrace on her. Under the regime of the godless there is a spiritual winter, during which it is impossible to distinguish the trees that are deprived of their leaves (*The Shepherd of Hermas*). There the words of the Prophet Micah are fulfilled indeed: "Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a friend,... A man's enemies are they of his own household" (Micah 7:5-6).

In 1964, the head of the Russian Church Abroad for many years, Metropolitan Anastassy, went into retirement because of the state of his health and his age. The Council of Bishops of the Church Abroad elected to the Chief Hierarch's throne the Bishop of Brisbane (Australia), Philaret (Voznesensky), who headed the Church Abroad, leading her along that path of church life by which she was led by his predecessors.

Russian emigrants, dispersed throughout the whole world, often finding themselves in difficult conditions, await that radiant day when

the Fatherland will be liberated from the regime of the ... to pieces the souls and bodies of their brethren, and when they will be able to unite with the latter. The Russian Church Abroad ... the heavy cross of exile. Without having altered Orthodoxy in any respect, preserving the traditions and customs of the Russian Church, she

her material property that is located abroad, she cares for her flock according to the measure of her strength, preserves it in Orthodoxy and raises new generations in it, and spreads Orthodoxy among the peoples in whose midst she finds herself.

In churches abroad, prayers are always proclaimed for the suffering Fatherland, for the persecuted Church, for the tortured and slain for whom they dare not pray openly in the Homeland, for the salvation of the Fatherland and its deliverance from the cruel regime, for the restoration of right belief and piety. These supplications are possible only under independence from those who are in the hands of that same cruel regime and submit to it.

The Russian Church Abroad, headed by a Council of Bishops,



*Metropolitan Philaret  
(Voznesensky, 1985)*

most of whom have been consecrated in the Diaspora and by their episcopal oath have promised to obey her ecclesiastical authority, has more than twenty bishops in various countries. She has monasteries for men and women, of which some have existed since the times of the Tsars (in Palestine), others received their beginning in Russia (Lesna Convent in France, Vladimir Mother of God Convents in California and Canada), and the remainder were founded in the days of our misfortunes, in the bosom of the Russian Church Abroad (such as Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, the Monastery of the Saint Job of Pochaev in Munich, Novo-Diveyevo Convent at Spring Valley, New York, the New Kursk Hermitage at Mahopac, New York, and others. The center of the Russian Church Abroad is located in New York, in a large building donated by an affluent Russian Orthodox layman. Here is located the Cathedral where the Wonder-working Kursk icon of Our Lady of the Sign is enshrined, the

residence of the metropolitan, the Office of the Synod headed by the Secretary, and various other departments.

The Russian Church Abroad has her own seminary (which stands in the ranks of higher educational institutions in accordance with local laws), its own secondary educational institutions and schools, in which children growing up abroad learn Orthodox doctrine and receive Russian culture.

The parishes and church communities of the Russian Church Abroad are scattered throughout the whole world: they are in large cities that have world-wide significance, and in desert places where only a handful



*The First-Hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, Metropolitan Vitaly, at the Mount of Olives Convent, 1986.*

of Russians live. They are cared for by priests who are often compelled to make great journeys in order to visit parishioners who live great distances away. Others have to procure their subsistence by some kind of work, since their poor flock cannot provide their livelihood.

The Russian Spiritual Mission in Jerusalem has special significance with its two convents (on the Mount of Olives and Gethsemane). The Mission continually struggles for the preservation of its holy places, on the



Mount of Olives, in Hebron, at the Judgement Gate and promotes the organization of pilgrimages.

The archpastors and pastors of the Church Abroad share with their flock all the spiritual and material burdens that are inescapably bound up with being in exile and they fulfill their duty of service to the Orthodox in particular the Russian, Church and the commands of their conscience with regard to their earthly homeland, Russia, and to their brethren.

But deprivations do not weigh upon them so much as the misunderstanding and the relationship to them of their brothers, the representatives of the other Orthodox Churches. While the Church Abroad goes on the same path to which at one time the Chief Hierarchs of the entire Orthodox Church gave their blessing, the relationship on the part of their successors has significantly changed. Restrictions are placed upon the Church Abroad, and demands are presented to her hierarchy and clergy that cannot be fulfilled by reason of conscience and pastoral care.

When Russia was prosperous, she gave every support to her non-Russian Orthodox brethren who were in worse circumstances, especially to those who had been subjugated by non-Orthodox rulers. It was not only the government that directed all its efforts to this end, but the whole people took part in it as well. Prayers for them were offered both in churches and in homes. All the evening prayers, as printed in the complete prayers books, ended with the petition, "Cast down the blaspheming kingdom of the Hagarenes and subject it to Orthodox kings, confirm in right belief and raise up the horn of Orthodox Christians." This was printed both in church service books and in prayers books for the people — anyone can verify it. The multitude of Russian people read this prayer daily in every corner of Russia right up to recent times.

Do we not all need to pray now even more for the casting down of a regime that is not merely blaspheming, but God-fighting, that has taken up arms not only against Orthodoxy, but against any kind of faith in God at all? And if prayers for this are frequently offered in the churches of other Christian confessions, should it not be the primary duty of Orthodox Christians to pray for this, and especially the sons of enslaved Russia who are outside her borders?

He who is in captivity, and he who is freedom, will give an answer in due time to the Great Hierarch, the All-just Judge.

May we hear from Him then: *Thou hast been faithful over a few things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord* (Matthew 25:33).

† Archbishop John of Brussels and Western Europe

## Commentary on the Contemporary State of Church Life

*... as dying, and behold we live... (II Cor 6:9)*

Spiritual succession from generation to generation is especially evident in the Russian Church Abroad in the person of the first hierarch. After the blessed repose of the long-suffering intercessor for Russian Orthodoxy, Metropolitan Philaret in November 1985, Metropolitan Vitaly (Ustinov) was chosen in 1986, to be the first hierarch for our Church. In the greeting addressed to the newly elected hierarch, Archbishop Anthony of Geneva (†1993) said, "May the Lord assist you in carrying the difficult cross of the first hierarch of the Russian Church, the cross of the Russian people, of their martyrs and confessors, may you be their hope and joy!" The Metropolitan himself, in one of his first epistles as first hierarch wrote, "The ship of our Church has entered into the stormy sea of the world. The blows of the violent, raging waves now shake the whole body of the ship... But we give thanks to the Lord for all things, for slander, for praise, and for threats. As a comfort to all faithful members of our Church I confirm the fact that all our episcopate is faithful to Christ..., of one mind and steadfast; that our clergy labor in the vineyard of Christ selflessly...and that the Grace of the Holy Spirit with His gifts of quiet joy and spiritual peace has not abandoned us, in spite of the turbulent sea all around us"... And, of course, woe to us if we do not make use of the gifts given to us from above, especially the gift of discernment. By means of discernment we can and must comprehend that which transpires around us.

It has now become more clear that the God-fighting rebellion which gripped our homeland Russia in the twentieth century was directed not only against the Orthodox Monarchy and the Russian people, but mainly against the Russian Church, which was always the bulwark of world



*His Eminence Metropolitan  
Vitaly Delivering a Sermon at  
Holy Trinity Monastery in  
Jordanville, New York, 1996*

Orthodoxy. Now the devil's plan has become clear: it was not to destroy the Russian Church but to establish the Bolshevik dictatorship in Russia, but during the years of chaos to enter into the very structure of the Church and to corrupt it. However, the devil was vanquished by the heroes of the spirit. The Confessors who refused to submit to the godless oppression. Their struggle has yet to be valued in its true light. Many people still remain under the influence of hierarchs who for some reason refuse to cast off the past of the Moscow Patriarchate. If Saint John Maximovich in 1960 wrote that, "The Church authority in Russia (i.e., the Moscow Patriarchate) is an image of captivity and spiritual powerlessness: neither is there freedom of will, nor action," then surely his words apply in our days. Now one can say that the bishops of the Moscow Patriarchate are held captive only by their own incorrect way of reasoning. The fruits of such captivity are participation in the ecumenical movement (which has as its secret agenda the creation of a "universal church" for the coming antichrist), and the willingness to serve any civil government — under the present circumstances, the spiritually antichristian "New World Order."



*Icon of Saint John  
Mounted Above His Reliquary*

God will be the judge of these hierarchs, but in Russia the faithful who attend church are not obliged to follow the lead of spiritually blind men. Therefore the Synod of

the Russian Church Abroad responded to the cry of the Russian faithful and in 1990 an received them under our omophoron made. At the same time the decision was made to legalize catacomb parishes. It was these very catacomb parishes which kept alive the flame of the unquenchable lampada of Orthodoxy during the reign of the bolsheviks in Russia. They were concealed in the "catacombs," i.e., they remained in an illegal status. The Russian Church Abroad always viewed itself as one with the persecuted Church in Russia. Thus the Church Council of the Church Abroad in 1971 witnessed that the "the free part of the Russian Church located beyond the borders of the USSR is heart and soul with the confessors of

the Faith, who are frequently called by the name the Catacomb Church, for they have been forced to conceal themselves from the civil authorities like unto the situation of the first centuries of the Christian era when Christians concealed themselves in the catacombs. The Council of Bishops acknowledges its spiritual unity with these faithful. The faithful of the Russian catacombs viewed the Church Abroad as the preserver of true Faith. Professor I. M. Andreyevsky, an eminent participant in the catacomb movement who left the USSR during World War II, witnesses that



*Bishop Benjamin, a Hierarch of the Free Russian Church in Russia, With Monastics of a Formerly Catacomb Community in Southern Russia, 1995. Nun Ierusalima, Wearing a Gold Cross, is a Former Spiritual Daughter of Hieromartyr Seraphim Zagorodsky*

the "Catacomb Church recognizes the Russian Church Abroad as its sister Church" and that the catacomb believers commemorate the first hierarch of the Church Abroad in their prayers, considering him to be the authentic head of the entire Russian Orthodox Church. Eventually, because of constant persecution, the catacomb faithful were deprived of an episcopate and in 1982 the Russian Church Abroad secretly consecrated a bishop to nurture the catacomb flock in Russia. Even earlier the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad received under its omophorion catacomb clergy who remained without hierarchal care.

Subsequently in 1990 clergy and numerous faithful of the Moscow Patriarchate began to unite with our Church, the majority of whom during the Soviet period knew nothing of the existence of the Russian Church Abroad. Hence making contact with the true Church was for them like meeting Christ. A feeling of co-suffering love for these "little ones" is what moved the hierarchs of the Russian Church Abroad to establish church life in Russia. Therefore, is it possible to agree with those who would call our parishes in Russia schismatic? For every person who is consciously a member of the Church Abroad it is totally understandable why the expectation of return to Russia to reunite with her spiritual brothers always represented the highest ideal for the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad during her wanderings throughout the world. Could our Church remain deaf to the cry of the divine trumpet announcing the hour of return? No, it could not.

And now for already six years pastors and self-sacrificing laymen, guided by our Russian hierarchs, openly and not in the catacombs as earlier, erected the temple not made by hands of forgotten and desecrated Holy Russia. Many labors and voluntary sacrifices are brought by these inconspicuous laborers to the altar of Christ. Though they are persecuted, misunderstood, and despised, often by those whom they once called brothers, they continue to believe unshakably in the truth of their chosen path. It is not coincidental that this is the same path that was followed by the myriad of New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia. The first impression of a casual bystander is that our Church in Russia is in the most difficult circumstances. Disunity, betrayal, schism, and persecution all complicate church life. Despite all of this, what is most important takes place in the bosom of our Church — the salvation of souls, the spiritual nurturing of those who by God's mercy have awakened and love Christ's Truth with their whole heart. It is of no consequence that the ancient monasteries and churches are in the hands of Sergianists and ecumenists, and that the faithful of our Church must huddle in "dens and caves of the earth," serving in apartments or even under the open sky. This is of no importance, for any conditions are conducive to saving one's soul, if only there is the desire to be saved. Even if at times it is difficult and people are offended to the point of tears, with help nowhere to be found, it is precisely then that the faithful experience the all-protective Grace of God, for the sake of which it would be worth bearing a hundred times more sorrows and sufferings.

Our Church is essential for Russia — She is the bearer of an untarnished Orthodox world outlook entrusted to us by the Confessors of Russia. With all Her strength our Church strives to encourage the upbringing of a new generation who will hold dear the best ideals of Imperial Russia. Then the people purified by repentance would be able to return to a God-



pleasing life under the government of an Orthodox Czar. Now when the prodigal Russian people seek happiness there where it is known not to be, the pastors of our Church strive to clarify to these deceived people this important thought, without standing fast in Orthodoxy, without steadfastness in a desire to abide in the true Church, which could amount for



*Participants of the Council of Bishops, 1996. First Hierarch Metropolitan Vitaly Center. Seated from left to right: Bishop Mitrofan of Boston, Archbishop Alypy of Chicago and Detroit, Archbishop Anthony of Western America and San Francisco, Archbishop Laurus of Syracuse and Holy Trinity, Archbishop Mark of Berlin and Germany and Britain, Archbishop Hilarion of Sydney and Australia and New Zealand. Standing from left to right: Bishop Agathangel of Simpheropol, Bishop Eutikhy of Ishm and Siberia, Bishop Daniel (Old Rite), Bishop Michael of Toronto, Bishop Varnava of Cannes, Archbishop Seraphim of Brussels and Western Europe, Bishop Benjamin of the Black Sea and Kuban, Bishop Kyrili of Seattle, Bishop Ambrose of Vevey, Bishop Gabriel of Manhattan.*

Russia an authentic Orthodox Czar, it is senseless to create a dwelling for a Russian Government, for that dwelling will be erected on sand....

One could only desire that everyone would understand that the faithful of the Russian Church (under the Church Abroad) are not hardened fanatics who have no desire to have dealings with anyone. To the contrary our hierarchy and flock grieve over the fact that we have no canonical relationship with so-called "official Orthodoxy." We would be glad if

such a relationship was restored but only that it take place in Christ's Truth and not as a mechanical act, designed to entice our Church into the worldwide movement of apostasy, i.e. falling away from authentic Orthodoxy. May this not be? One catacomb priest in the 1940s expressed the profound thought, with which probably all the faithful of our Church in Russia would agree. He wrote, "Here are the catacombs. I am here not because I wish anyone harm, or desire to fight with someone. I am here only in order to preserve the purity of Orthodoxy."

Hieromonk Seraphim Rose, the well known spiritual writer who with his whole heart accepted the inheritance of the "Russian Catacombs" expressed a similar thought in the following words:

"Due to the ever increasing apostasy, we cannot enter into eucharistic communion with those jurisdictions which are not in union with our Synodal Church. This policy we adhere to without any malice or judgement."

The Church Abroad, being sufficiently well informed about the character and aims, so pernicious for the Church, of the Ecumenical Movement, is not a member of the World Council of Churches and does not take part in its work whatsoever. Moreover, under Ecumenism, instead of an open and vocal witness to Orthodoxy, the Orthodox Churches travel a path searching for compromising dogmatic, ecclesiological and other commonalities with non-Orthodox and even non-Christian confessions. The leadership of the Church Abroad has more than once expressed its negative attitude toward ecumenism and has not changed this position till this day.

More evidence to the correct path of the Church Abroad, besides the above mentioned, is that her ties with her sister Old Calendar Churches,



*The Feast of the Transfiguration of Christ in Slatcarea Monastery in Romania, 1996. From left to right: Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Fili (Greek Old Calendar Church), Metropolitan Vlasie (Romanian Old Calendar Church), Archbishop Laurus of Syracuse and Holy Trinity (Secretary of the Russian Church Abroad), Bishop Photios of Triaditsa (Bulgarian Old Calendar Church).*

in Greece, Rumania and Bulgaria are being supported and strengthened. However the Church Abroad has no canonical union with the eastern Patriarchates, which represent "official Orthodoxy," due to their participation in the Ecumenical Movement and their acceptance of the New Calendar.

As mentioned previously our Church cannot have canonical union with the Moscow Patriarchate until its hierarchy has resolved, according to our understanding at least, a few essential problems.

First, there must be an official condemnation of Metropolitan Sergius' Declaration which according to Archbishop Seraphim's (Svezevsky, †1996) concise definition, legitimized serving both God and Mammon.

Second, there must occur a glorification of the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia (according to the pattern of glorification celebrated by the Church Abroad in 1981), especially those of the Martyrs who refused to submit to the God-fighting government and remained faithful to the persecuted Church of Christ, for example, New Hieromartyr Joseph of Petrograd and others.

Third, the Moscow Patriarchate must refuse to participate in the Ecumenical Movement and to concelebrate with new calendarists. (Follow the example of the Church Abroad and anathematize the Ecumenical Heresy as done by the Church Abroad in 1983.)

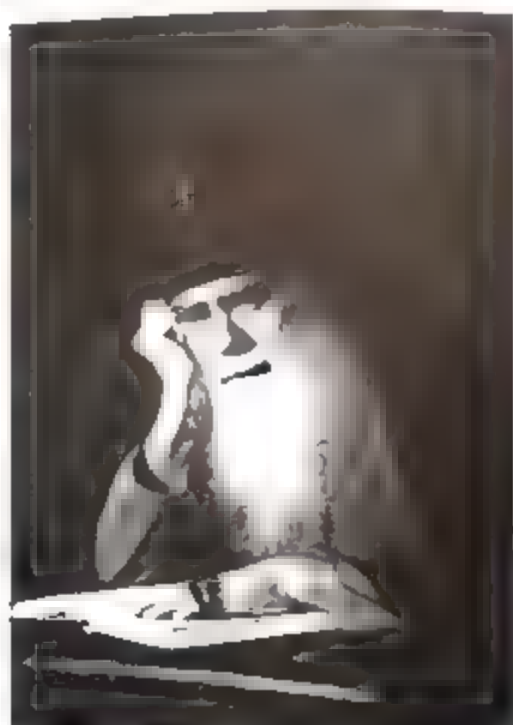
Fourth, within the bosom of the Moscow Patriarchate the activity of Modernists must be decisively eliminated.

The most important moment capable of improving the state of the Moscow Patriarchate is the moment when Her faithful perceive the truth that the various divergences from Holy Orthodoxy are the fruit of Sergianism, which is a spiritual sin allowing a compromise with evil for the sake of some imaginary good. In the past decade the clergy of the Patriarchate have by their activity consistently remained faithful to the principle of Sergianism. This principle must be rejected for it will eventually lead its followers to bow to the antichrist. Of course at that point these misled people will affirm that with their compromise they are saving the Church...

We, the faithful of the Russian Church Abroad, are summoned not only to preserve the true Faith, but by prayer, and, if necessary, by word and deed, to aid those Orthodox who through the force of circumstances have been drawn into deceptive sergianist-ecumenism or abide in the darkness of unbelief. We must act with meekness, love, and the understanding of our own weaknesses. Indeed our Church does not exist in order to compete with "official Orthodoxy," we do not attempt to take over their church buildings, to interfere in their sphere of influence, but according to the dictates of conscience we are obliged to pass on to the Russian people and Orthodox everywhere those Gospel Talents which

have been lost in the world, those which have been preserved and multiplied by the spiritual leaders of the Russian Diaspora, for example, Saint John of San Francisco, Metropolitans Anthony (Khrapovitsky) and Anastassy (Gribanovsky), Philaret (Vosnesensky), Archbishop Averky (Taushev) all of whom like the Old Testament prophets led their people through the spiritual desert towards salvation.

The Russian Church Abroad has numerous holy objects. Here there is the Kursk-Root Icon of the Mother of God, which appeared to the world in 1295 and is well-known to all Russian Orthodox believers. Here there is also the Myrrh-streaming Iveron Icon of the Mother of God. Fragrant myrrh began to flow from this icon on the 24th of November 1982 in Montreal (Canada), in the home of an Orthodox Chilean, José Muñoz. Until today it abundantly streams forth a fragrant, healing myrrh and has already helped hundreds of people, in response to their prayers. Even copies of this icon sometimes stream forth myrrh and healings. It is present at all the main events of our Church, sanctifying feasts, solemnities and glorifications. The appearance of this icon is one more mercy of God for our Church, which strives to preserve true and uncompromising Orthodoxy in this age of apostasy.



*The Ever-memorable  
Archbishop Averky (Taushev) †1976*

The life of the Church Abroad in recent decades has been marked by many Grace-filled events and, most notably, by new canonizations of Russian saints.

In 1964, the holy, righteous John (Sergiev) of Kronstadt, a great luminary of the Russian land and a wonderworker, who has always been venerated by the Russian Orthodox people in Russia and abroad, was canonized by the Council of Bishops. A parish and a charitable fund in Utica, New York, and an orphanage in Chile have been named after him.

In 1970, Saint Herman, the enlightener of Alaska, was canonized.

In 1978, blessed Xenia of Petersburg, the fool for Christ, was glorified. She is especially venerated by the believers of Petersburg who receive Grace-filled help from her.

In 1981, an event took place, which Russian Orthodox believers long awaited — the choir of the New Martyrs and Confessors, headed by Emperor Nicholas II and Patriarch Tikhon, was canonized. The iconographer, Archimandrite Kiprian (Pishew), a monk of Holy Trinity Monastery, painted an icon of the New Martyrs. Thousands of copies of this icon, magnificently executed by typographical means, are being sent abroad to believers in Russia, at their request. In the state of Oregon, a church has been built in honor of the New Martyrs of Russia. In other places there are chapels or side-altars dedicated to the New Martyrs. Archbishop Anthony of San Francisco has composed a service to them.

On the 10th of May 1990, in Canada, the venerable elders of Optina Monastery were glorified.

On October 7/20 1996, Saint Jonah of Hankau who struggled and reposed in 1925 in Manchuria, was glorified. After his repose he was glorified by manifest miracles. Concerning Saint Jonah, Saint John of San Francisco wrote: "Already here in the diaspora we have righteous ones in our time. Although they are not yet glorified, people receive wondrous signs from them. For example Bishop Jonah of Manchuria."

Amid the sorrows and deprivations which continually pursue the militant Church of Christ, let the words of prophesy spoken by our man of prayer Saint John of San Francisco comfort us: "Our Church is small but pure as crystal." Our Church is pure and holy not because of personal righteousness, which, alas, we have not, but thanks to the treasure preserved without compromise within the heart of the Church, thanks to the Truth of Christ.

Therefore, in spite of the snares of the devil the true Russian Orthodox Church is alive, and will continue to live, for Christ is true to his promises!

*Rassaphor-monk Vsevolod, 1996*





# The Sorrowful Path — the Glorious Path

## Important Dates in the History of the Russian Church Abroad



*The First Emigration, 1920*

- 1919, May 18–24** — The Southern Church Council took place in Stavropol at which the Higher Church Administration was formed in Southern Russia.
- 1920, November** — The evacuation of the White Army from the Crimea took place.
- 1920, November 19** — the first session of the Higher Church Administration outside the borders of Russia took place.
- 1920, Nov. 7/20** — the Holy Synod of the Russian Church under the presidency of Patriarch Tikhon ratified the Directive no. 362, concerning the independent governing of dioceses which found themselves out of contact with the Synod and Patriarch, on the basis of which the Russian Church Abroad was founded.
- 1920, Dec. 2** — the Locum Tenens of the Patriarchal Throne in Constantinople, Metropolitan Dorotheos, gave the blessing for the Higher Church Administration to continue its work under the leadership of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky)

- 1921 — By the invitation of Patriarch Varnava of Serbia the Higher Church Administration moved to Serbia
- 1921, July 9/26 — The first session of the Higher Church Administration took place in Sremsky Carlovtsy
- 1921, Autumn — The resolution refusing Autocephaly to the Polish Church was issued by Patriarch Tikhon.
- 1921, Nov. 13/26 — The General Church Council approved the canonical document, "The Statutes Regulating the Government of the Higher Church Administration Abroad."
- 1921, Nov. 17/30 — The "Regulations for the Government of the Russian Dioceses Abroad" was ratified by the General Church Council
- 1921, Nov. 21/Dec. 2 — The first General Council of the Russian Church Abroad took place in Sremsky Carlovtsy.
- 1921 — The General Church Council issued the following documents: "An Epistle of the General Council of the Church Abroad to the Peace Conference at Genoa" with the request to help free Russia from the Bolsheviks; "An Epistle to All the Rulers and Peoples of the World who Believe in God" with the request to aid starving Russia.
- 1921 — The Finnish diocese was forcefully taken from the Russian Church by the Finnish Church authorities who wanted to join the Church of Constantinople.
- 1922, March 3/16 — Patriarch Tikhon officially thanked Patriarch Dimitry of Serbia for providing asylum for the Russian Hierarchs.
- 1922, March 11/24 — A new Diocesan Cathedra was established in Harbin which was headed by Metropolitan Methodius.
- 1922, May 5 — Patriarch Tikhon was forced by the Soviet Government to issue Directive no. 348, disbanding the Higher Church Administration Abroad.
- 1922, June 15 — The Higher Church Administration sent an appeal to the heads of the non-Orthodox churches, and the governors and governments of the world to come to the defense of Patriarch Tikhon who was arrested in Moscow.
- 1922, Aug. 23/Sept. 5 — The Higher Church Administration Abroad recognized Metropolitan Agafangel as the Locum Tenens of Patriarch Tikhon.

- 1922, Sept. 13** — The Council of Bishops Abroad resolved in accordance with the directive of Patriarch Tikhon to abolish the Higher Church Administration to create the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad. The Council issued an epistle concerning Spiritism, Magnetism, Theosophy, and other occult practices.
- 1923, April 2-4** — The Detroit Council of Bishops of the North American Diocese illegally proclaimed autocephaly for the "American Orthodox Church" headed by Metropolitan Platon.
- 1923, May 22/June 4** — The Council of Bishops rejected the Gregorian Calendar (New Style) and other ecclesiastical innovations.



*Monastery of Saint Job of Pochaev Lodomirovo in Carpathian Russia*

- 1923** — Archimandrite (later archbishop) Vitaly (Maximenko) founded the monastery of St Job of Pochaev at Lodomirovo in Carpatho-Russia.
- 1924, July 30/Aug. 12** — The Synod of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad issued a directive "To establish prayer for the salvation of the Russian nation and the calming of peoples' passions."

1925, Feb. 15/28 — Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) addressed a letter to the rulers and governments of the world and the League of Nations concerning the persecution of the Church in Russia

1923, July 24/Aug. 6 — At the session of the Synod of Bishops a commission was established concerning the question of union of the Anglican Church with Orthodoxy

1925, Nov. 12 — The Synod of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad recognized Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa as the Locum Tenens of the patriarchal throne.

1926, Jan. 3/16 — The Council of Bishops published a protest concerning the arrest of Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa.

1926, June 29 — Metropolitan Evlogy of Western Europe and Metropolitan Platon of North America left the Council of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad.

1926 — Nearly 30 old-calendarist monks, exiled from Valaam by the new-calendarists, came to Serbia on the invitation of the Russian Church Abroad.



*Milkovo Monastery*

1926 — A monastery was established in Milkovo, Serbia, by the Russian exiled monks under the abbot, sche-archimandrite Ambrose (Kurganov).

1927, May 6 — Theological courses were established in Harbin.

1927, July 16/29 — The Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius was published, among other points, demanding loyalty to the Soviet Government from the bishops abroad

1927, Sept. 9 — The Council of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad announced its loyalty to the Locum Tenens Metropolitan Peter and its refusal to accept the Declaration of Metropolitan Sergius.

1927, Sept. 6/19 — The Council of Bishops sent an epistle to the North American flock suspending Metropolitan Platon and his clergy from serving for causing a schism.

1928, May 29 — Metropolitan Sergius declared the Council of Bishops and the Synod of the Russian Church Abroad to be established.

1928 — The first issue of "Orthodox Carpatho-Russia" was published in Carpatho-Russia at the St. Job of Pochaev press at Ladomirovo.

1928 — Hieromonk Panteleimon procured a piece of land in Jordanville on which later was founded Holy Trinity Monastery.

1929, Sept. 2/25 — The epistle, "To the Orthodox Population of the Far East" was published by Metropolitan Anthony in which he summoned them to war against the enemies of the Church.

1929, Dec. 18/31 — The Council of Bishops issued an epistle calling for the establishment of St. Vladimir's day as a major Russian church-national feast.

1930 — In the Spring after Pascha, with the blessing of Archbishop Apollinary, Hieromonk Panteleimon and monk Iakov founded Holy Trinity Monastery.

1930 — Protopresbyter Father Constantine Izrastsov built the first Orthodox Church in Brazil.

1932, Aug. 28/ Sept. 10 — The Council of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad anathematized Freemasonry.

1934 — The diocese in Brazil was established and Bishop Theodosius arrived there.

1934, June 22 — Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) suspended the clergy of the Russian Church Abroad from serving.

1934, Oct. 13/26 — The Council of Bishops consented to the establishment of a world-wide Christian front in the struggle with atheism and Communism.

1935, Oct. 28 — A Chinese Orthodox Christian Brotherhood was founded in Shanghai.



*The Grave of Metropolitan Anthony in Belgrade*



- 1935, Nov. 15** — At a joint session under the chairmanship of the Serbian Patriarch Varnava at Sremsky Carlovtsy, Metropolitans Anastassy, fulfilling the duties as first hierarch of the Church Abroad, Evlogy and Platon, who returned from schism all signed the "Temporary Regulations of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad."
- 1935, Nov. 17** — The Council of Bishops of the Russian Church Abroad condemned the heretical teaching of Archpriest Sergius Bulgakov concerning Sophia, the Wisdom of God.
- 1936, Jan. 20/Feb. 2** — The cornerstone for the memorial church to the Czar Martyr Nicholas was laid in Brussels.
- 1936, Feb.** — Metropolitan Evlogy and the flock subservient to him permanently broke away from the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.
- 1936, June 28/July 10** — Blessed Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) reposed in the Lord.
- 1936** — Metropolitan Anastassy (Gribanovsky) was elected as the first hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.
- 1937** — Missionary courses were offered in Belgrade to fight against atheism.
- 1937** — An Orthodox theological school was opened in the building of the Synod of Bishops.
- 1937, Oct. 5-8** — The General Church Council of laymen and clergy in America declared itself to be part of the Russian Church Abroad.
- 1938, Aug.** — The Second General Council of the Russian Church Abroad took place in Sremsky Carlovtsy
- 1940, Sept. 10/23** — The Council of Bishops confirmed the, "Statutes for the Pastoral-theological courses of the Brotherhood of St. Job of Pochaev at Ladomurovo."



*Metropolitan Anastassy  
(Gribanovsky, †1965)*

- 1942 — The convent of the Vladimir icon of the Mother of God, which was begun in the Urals and later located in China, was established in San Francisco.
- 1943, Oct. 3/16 — The Council of Bishops issued a statement not recognizing the patriarchate of Metropolitan Sergius
- 1945 — Metropolitan Anastassy left Munich with the Kursk Icon and arrived in Geneva
- 1945, Oct. — The epistle of Metropolitan Anastassy, the First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, was published in answer to the appeal of Patriarch Alexis I of the Moscow Patriarchate
- 1946, April 23/May 6 — The Council of Bishops accepted into the Russian Church Abroad hierarchs from the Ukrainian and Belorussian Churches.
- 1946, April 26/May 9 — The Council of Bishops did not accept the election of Alexis I and rejected his "Epistle to the Clergy and Laity of the 'Carlovtsy Orientation'."
- 1946, Nov. — At the Cleveland Council the American Metropolia again broke away from the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad
- 1946 — The Australian diocese was established.
- 1946, Dec. 1 — The Brotherhood of St. Job of Pochaev from Ladomirovo, comprising 14 members, arrived at Holy Trinity Monastery where they united with the brotherhood of the monastery.
- 1946 — 1964 — During these years the immigration from Harbin to Australia took place.
- 1947 — The journal "Orthodox Russia," formerly "Orthodox Carpatho-Russia" was first published at Holy Trinity Monastery.
- 1948, Oct. 1/14 — The opening of Holy Trinity Seminary at Jordanville N.Y. was established.
- 1950, Jan. 16/29 — The church at the New Kursk-root Hermitage at Mahopak was consecrated.
- 1950, Sept. 18/Oct. 1 — The memorial church to the Czar Martyr Nicholas II was consecrated in Brussels.
- 1950, Nov. — Metropolitan Anastassy and the Synod of Bishops moved to America.

- 1950, Nov. 13/26 — The cathedral at Holy Trinity Monastery at Jordanville was consecrated
- 1950, Nov. 29/Dec. 12 — The "Normal Parish By-laws" were ratified by the Council of Bishops.
- 1950, Dec. — The Lesna convent moved from Serbia to France. The convent was founded by St. John of Kronstadt and after the revolution moved to Serbia.
- 1950 — The printshop of St. Job of Pochaev in San Paulo published the first issue of "The Orthodox Observer." Later this journal would be published in Canada.



*The Nuns of Lesna Convent in France with Hierarchs of the Russian Church Abroad. Seated from left to right: Bishop Hilarion, Archbishop Anthony of Geneva (†1993), Metropolitan Vitaly, Archbishop Mark.*

- 1950 — A large group of immigrants arrived in San Francisco from Shanghai China

- 1951, Jan. 23/Feb. 5 — The Kursk Icon of the Mother of God arrived in America
- 1952, Aug. 24/Sept. 6 — The Orthodox cemetery at Novo-Davayevvo was consecrated in Spring Valley New York
- 1955, Jan. 27/Feb. 9 — The Synod ratified the "Regulations for the St Vladimir's Russian Orthodox Youth Groups"
- 1956, Oct. 2/15 — The Council of Bishops ratified the, "Statutes of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad."
- 1956 — The journal "Church Word" was first published by the Australian-New Zealand diocese.
- 1956 — The New Shamordino Convent was founded in Kentlyn Australia.
- 1957, July 4/17 — Metropolitan Anastassy's epistle on repentance was published.
- 1958 Jan. 20/Feb. 2 — The first Orthodox church in Peru was consecrated by Archbishop Leonty at Lima.
- 1958, Sept. 13-15 — In connection with the visit of Khrushchev to America molebens were served in all the churches for the salvation of Russian and pannykhidas were served for all those slain and tortured by the godless ones.
- 1959, Oct. 12 — The Cathedral of Our Lady of the Sign in New York City was consecrated.
- 1959, Oct. 30/Nov. 12 — The Council of Bishops ratified the "Statutes for Monasteries of the Russian Church Abroad."
- 1960 — The first Russian Orthodox Youth Conference took place in Chicago.
- 1964, May 14/27 — Bishop Philaret was chosen as Metropolitan.
- 1964 — The construction of the Cathedral of the Mother of God, the Joy of All Who Sorrow, was completed in San Francisco under the active participation of Archbishop John (Maximovitch).
- 1964, June 4/17 — The Council of Bishops issued an Encyclical to the flock and Christians of the free world about persecution of the faithful in the USSR.
- 1964, Oct. 19/Nov. 1 — The glorification of St. John of Kronstadt took place

- 1965, May 9/22** — Metropolitan Anastassy (Gribanovsky) reposed in the Lord.
- 1970** — The 50th anniversary of the founding of the Russian Church Abroad was celebrated. The missionary from Valaam, St. Herman of Alaska was glorified.
- 1971, Sept 1/14** — The following documents were published by the Council of Bishops, "The situation of the "Catacomb Church," and "Refusal to Recognize Patriarch Pimen."
- 1974., Sept. 12/25** — The third General Council of the Russian Church Abroad began at Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville. The Council confirmed all previous decisions. One of the more important decisions of this Council was the lifting of the ban on the "Old Rite."



*Participants of the Third General Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky), center*

- 1977** — Metropolitan Philaret accepted into the Russian Church Abroad a group of catacomb clergy in Russia who were without arch-pastoral care.
- 1978, Sept. 11/24** — The glorification of Blessed Xenia took place.





- 1982, Sept. 20/Aug. 2 — A local glorification took place at the Skete of the Prophet Elias on Mt. Athos, of St. Paisius Velichkovsky.
- 1982, Sept. 20/ Aug. 2 — The New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia and the Royal Martyrs were glorified.
- 1982, Nov. 24 — The miracle of the Myrrh-streaming Iveron Icon was manifested in Montreal, Canada.
- 1982 — According to the decision of the Synod of the Russian Church Abroad a secret consecration of Bishop Lazarus took place in Moscow so he might care for the catacomb flock in Russia.
- 1982 — The 100th anniversary of the Russian Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society was celebrated.
- 1983 — The Council of Bishops anathematized Ecumenism.
- 1985, Nov. 8/21 — Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky) reposed.
- 1986 — Archbishop Vitaly of Canada was chosen as the first hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.
- 1988, Aug. 2-9 — A council of Bishops was called and universal celebrations occurred to honor the 1000th anniversary of the Baptism of Russia.
- 1990, May 10 — The Optina Elders and St. Paisius Velichkovsky were glorified.
- 1990, May 2/15 — The Council of Bishops ratified the "Statutes for the Parishes of the Free Russian Orthodox Church" located in Russia.
- 1990, May 3/16 — The Council of Bishops confirmed the hierarchy in Russia.
- 1990, July 14/27 — The Synod of Bishops did not recognize the election of Patriarch Alexis II of the Moscow Patriarchate.
- 1992, Nov. 25/Dec. 8 — The Synod entered into communion with the Old Calendarist Church of Rumania.
- 1992 — The Russian monks were evicted from the Skete of the Prophet Elias for refusing to commemorate the New Calendar Patriarch of Constantinople.
- 1994, Jan. 16/29 — St. Innocent of Moscow and St. Nicholas of Japan were glorified.



1994, June 19/July 2 — St. John the Wonderworker of Shanghai and San Francisco was glorified.

1994, July 2/15 — The Synod entered into communion with the Old Calendarists Synod of Metropolitan Cyprian and with the Bulgarian Old Calendarist.

1994, July 16-17 — The celebration of the 200th anniversary of Orthodoxy in America took place in Mayfield Pennsylvania.

1994 — A mission of the Church Abroad was established in South Korea.

1995 — Universal celebrations took place in honor of the 700th anniversary of the finding of the Kursk-root icon of the Mother of God, the Directress of the Russian diaspora.

1996, Oct. 7/20 — St. Jonah of Hankau who struggled and reposed in 1925 in Manchuria, was glorified. After his repose he was glorified by manifest miracles.



*The Glorification of Saints Innocent of Moscow and Nicholas of Japan in San Francisco*